

3 Central New York substance abuse, mental health providers merge into \$83 million giant

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Helio Health operates an outpatient and mental health clinic in the Learbury Centre on North Salina Street in Syracuse.

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Syracuse, N.Y. — Three Central New York nonprofits that provide substance abuse, mental health and housing services have merged to form an organization that serves more than 12,000 people a year.

Syracuse-based [Helio Health](#) and Central New York Services and Utica-based Insight House merged into one organization under the Helio Health name on Jan. 1.

The merged organization has combined resources that include 35 inpatient, outpatient and residential care centers in Binghamton, Rochester, Syracuse and Utica; 1,345 beds; 820 employees; and an \$83 million budget.

Jeremy Klemanski, who was president and CEO of Helio Health before the merger and holds the same positions with the combined organization, said the change will permit a more efficient and effective delivery of substance abuse and mental health services and related housing services to the 12,000 people it serves annually.

In one of the merged organization's first moves, two outpatient clinics just a mile apart in Utica — one operated by Central New York Services and the other by Insight House — have been merged into the Insight House facility. Before the merger, the two clinics lost money, but the merged facility operates in the black, he said.

Klemanski said Helio Health's facilities can also share staff and client information across its many sites. For example, when a doctor in Utica is not available, a doctor in Syracuse can step in so that services to clients with addiction and mental health disorders are not interrupted, he said.

“This merger is designed to create better systems for people who need behavioral healthcare or need housing services, and people who need both in some cases,” he said.

The merger comes a year after the three organizations agreed to affiliate, allowing them to share services such as payroll, accounting and information technology support. The affiliation served to smooth the transition to a full merger once the combination was approved by state regulators.

Helio Health, which was known as [Syracuse Behavioral Healthcare](#) until 2018, celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020.

John Warren, who was executive director of Central New York Services, is vice president of residential construction and development for the merged organization. Donna Vitagliano, who was executive director of Insight House, has retired.

Helio Health’s headquarters remains for now at 55 E. Genesee St., but Klemanski said the organization is looking for a new home. The organization also has administrative offices at 518 James St., the former headquarters of Central New York Services.

The organization receives its funding from about 40 sources, including private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and state and federal contracts.